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Contains: *Weight Gain, Unrealistic Breast Expansion*

The Belly Dancers

Naima's hips gyrated as she performed the dance routine. Tiny bells sewn into the tassels that lined the belt above her flowing silk pants tinkled out a constant clatter as she moved. She gave an inviting, alluring smile to the crowd that had gathered in the open-air market; men, women, and children watching the trio of belly dancers perform. A crowd whose eyes slid past Naima to raptly follow Samira.

Naima held her broad, friendly grin for their audience, but inside, her blood was boiling. She and Samira were both junior dancers apprenticing under Yasmin, a woman in her late forties who still moved with more grace than her twenty-year-old trainees. Why, then, was Samira dancing in the center of the troupe, in the lead position? Naima knew why, and that knowing only made her blood boil hotter.

A healthy chest was not essential for belly dancing. Samira's olive-skinned E-cups certainly jiggled in her beaded harem top much more than Naima's B's, but the dance was meant to draw eyes to hips and belly, sometimes at smiling faces. If anything, Samira's flat stomach and overlarge breasts should have put *her* in the backline instead of Naima. Her dancing wasn't even that good! Yes, she'd improved in the year they'd been traveling with Yasmin, but Naima had better form, and while neither young woman could match their teacher's stamina, BX always tired before Naima.

As their dance concluded, BX smiled and bowed to the crowd as they tossed coins and small bills, flashing extra cleavage at the more handsome men. Naima thought, "*It just isn't fair.*"

Late that night, Naima sat in the motel bed she shared with Yasmin. At first, it annoyed her that BX got a bed all to herself just because she was taller than Naima or Yasmin. But after just one night of being kicked or left blanketless by her busty co-dancer's restless sleep, Naima welcomed sharing a bed with the older woman.

Sitting against the headboard with her knees drawn up, Naima poured over the ancient book she'd 'borrowed' from Yasmin's bag. Her teacher claimed it was a collection of dance techniques written by a long-forgotten master of the art, but Naima was certain there were magic spells in the book. Unfortunately, the language in which it was written was also long-forgotten.

It had taken months of asking and begging and reading over Yasmin's shoulder for Naima to learn a few of the words. She poured over the brittle, parchment-like pages whenever these bouts of insomnia struck. A soft snort from Yasmin made Naima jump

—nearly tearing the page she'd just turned. She closed the book over her finger and stuffed it under the blankets, but Yasmin was still sound asleep. Naima scolded herself for being so skittish; her teacher always slept like the dead.

When Naima opened the book again, the pages around her finger weren't the ones she'd been trying to read a moment earlier. Her brow furrowed, and she clutched the book in both hands as she tried to sort out the words.

Kher netjeru ba'u em kheru u khet enekheten jub em ren netjeru.

"Wish... your heart... speak words?" She whispered.

This was it! Below these instructions was a list of phrases with minuscule letters beside each that could only be descriptions of each spell! Naima ran her finger down the list, only stopping long enough to identify a word or two in each enchantment. "*Hair, childbirth, crops, warmth, pain relief...*"

On the third page, she found one that looked promising. "*Bountiful appetite... weight gain...*" Naima set the book on her knees and stared up at the cracked motel ceiling. If she could enchant Samira with a spell that gave her a big appetite and made her gain weight, it should knock her down a peg—Naima would finally have her chance to shine. But would it even work?

Quietly as she could, Naima pushed the covers off her legs and stood. She tiptoed around the room to the far side of Samira's bed. Some part of her wanted to be as far away from Yasmin as possible when she tried this, though of the two of them, Samira was more likely to wake up when she read the spell aloud. Naima stared down at her sleeping troupe mate with disdain. Samira was only covered by a single sheet and, even softened by gravity in her current posture, her full breasts rose and fell with each slow breath.

Naima opened the book, focussing her will on what she wanted. Slowly, haltingly, sounding out each word, she read, "*iru enekh sekhet neferu w reku en ekhent w shai*" in a breathy whisper.

A soft glow of light emanated from the book, sending tingling gooseflesh down Naima's arm and into her chest. It settled in her belly, and when she looked up at Samira's sleeping form, the taller girl's body was glowing as well. It was subtle, like the radiance of a beautiful woman—which Samira certainly was—but amplified. A cold tremor of panic ran down Naima's body, and she backed away from the bed as if from a wild animal. She folded the book closed and slipped it into Yasmin's bag.

As she pulled the covers up to her neck, rolling onto her side, facing away from Yasmin, Naima's lips curled into a smug smile. She drifted off to sleep, imagining Samira's perfect hourglass body plumping up into a proper belly dancer's body. Without those disproportionate curves to distract from her lack of talent, Samira was demoted from the center spot, where Naima gleefully took her place.

At breakfast the next morning, Samira ordered two plates. When Yasmin raised an eyebrow, Samira said, "I'm famished. I must have danced harder than I thought yesterday."

The dance troupe stayed in town for three more weeks until their tips started to dry up, and Yasmin declared it was time to move on. As they loaded their bags into Yasmin's car, Samira said, "Heyyy Naims, would you grab me a couple snacks for the road?"

The taller girl was eyeing the vending machine with pursed lips. Naima said, "Why can't you get them yourself?"

Samira stared at the pavement, and her cheeks took on a faint redness. "I'm all out of cash, please?? I'll pay you back!"

Naima had noticed every time Samira snuck out of the motel room to raid the vending machine. She also stopped at one of the food stands in the market nearly every time they performed, no matter how close it was to their regular meal times. It was little wonder where all Samira's money had gone.

"Yeah, that's fine," Naima said as she walked to the machine. Her grumbling tone wasn't entirely fake—she knew Samira would never actually pay her back. But the appetite part of the enchantment was definitely working, even if Naima was still waiting for Samira's belly to appear.

They stayed three weeks in the next town and a full month in the town after that. The crowds gradually got larger, which meant more money in the box and more snacks for Samira. She started ordering extra starters and sides with her double entree meals.

One evening, Naima watched Samira devour a cheeseburger, tater tots, a fried chicken wrap, mac and cheese, nachos, and potato skins after eating most of an artichoke dip appetizer and a bowl of soup. When the server came around, she asked, "Would you ladies like to look at our dessert menu?"

Samira tapped an index finger against her pretty bow lips and said, "I think I would."

While Samira was perusing the menu, Naima stole a sly glance at her troupe mate's middle. They'd changed out of their dance costumes, and Samira was wearing denim shorts and a crop top. Her light brown stomach was flat as ever; if anything, it was starting to look a little concave despite the absurd amount of food she'd eaten. And, of course, displayed prominently in her tight little top, Samira's cleavage looked huge. Maybe even a little bigger than usual.

Naima seethed. Her own outfit consisted of stretchy leggings and a long top that covered her hips. Neither pair of jeans she owned fit comfortably, and while a bit of healthy paunch was essential for a belly dancer, hers was starting to get a little *too* healthy. She didn't think she was eating any more than usual, but spending so much time with her gorging troupe mate was clearly rubbing off on her.

Samira ordered chocolate lava cake. Naima promised herself not to touch any more appetizers. Yasmin scanned the bill and suggested they start eating at buffets.

Town after town, their lives continued in this pattern. By the fifth town they visited after Naima's incident with the book, they were drawing big enough crowds to stay two months in the same place. Samira stuffed herself at every meal, but Naima was the one gaining weight. She started eating salads for dinner, having a single piece of fruit for breakfast, and skipping lunch most days. For a while, it was less apparent how much Samira ate. At buffets, the other two women didn't have to hear the tall dancer rattle off an absurd list of food to a server. But Naima sometimes counted the number of trips Samira made to the buffet tables. Three, then four, until most nights, she and Yasmin sat for nearly an hour after they'd both finished eating while Samira cleared plate after plate.

“Naima, dear...” Yasmin said one night in their motel room. “I know I told you a belly dancer’s physique is more... forgiving than other forms of dance, but...” The older woman touched her own soft middle as if searching for a tactful way to finish her statement.

“I know...” Naima whined, clutching her belly with both hands. Soft flesh oozed inside her shirt, bubbling out around her fingers. “I’ve been eating healthier; I don’t know what’s happening!”

Yasmin’s smile was sympathetic. “Maybe try a bit of exercise after dance practice. You’re young; I’m sure you can do it with just a little effort.”

Samira pushed open the motel room door carrying an armload of chips, candy bars, and snack cakes. “Hey, Yaz?”

Naima caught Yasmin’s briefly furrowed brow—the older woman had given up trying to get Samira to stop using the nickname. “Yes, dear?”

“I think I need some new costumes.”

“Is there something wrong with the ones you have?”

“Well, my top was pinching really bad today. I think that last laundromat shrank it.”

Naima glanced at Samira’s skin-tight singlet, amazed she hadn’t noticed it before now. Even more surprising was that Samira hadn’t noticed. “*She really does have tits for brains.*”

Under the material of her shirt, Samira’s breasts were spilling out of her bra, pooling over the cups and making small rolls of fat under her armpits. Naima wondered how she’d even gotten the bra fastened and how it wasn’t just as uncomfortable as her dance top. Her laundromat theory was complete nonsense. Samira’s tops hadn’t shrunk any more than her appetite. Somehow, the enchantment Naima put on her troupe mate wasn’t making her fat—it was making her ridiculous tits grow even larger!

As the three women watched the hotel television, Naima couldn’t ignore the sounds of Samira stuffing her face with vending machine garbage. It was such bullshit that Samira could eat like a pig with no consequences while she ate like a rabbit and couldn’t stop bloating. Plucking at her pinching waistband, Naima resolved to take Yasmin’s advice, starting tomorrow.

Naima stopped eating breakfast altogether, starting her day with just a cup of black tea. She switched to dry salads for lunch and dinner. She went on runs twice a day but got winded after a few blocks. Still, her weight continued to climb. Her little paunch grew into a full beer belly, drooping over her dance pants. Love handles blossomed above her hips, slowly swelling until they connected her belly into a plump ring of fat that made a tire all the way around what had once been her waist. Her arms thickened into soft tubes that jiggled almost as much as her belly when she danced. Her hips spread until her thighs were the size of tree trunks, tapering down into dimpled knees and round cankles, and her shoes started to pinch as even her feet grew thicker.

At one of their stops, Samira met up with Katy, a friend from high school who was attending college there. When they shared an excited hug, Katy's eyes bulged. She took a step back, looking Samira up and down. "What happened to you, girl? You're huge!"

Samira wore skinny jeans and a printed button blouse with ruffles around the neckline. The pants showed off the curves of her ass, which had rounded out an inch or so under Naima's enchantment. The blouse hung loosely around her narrow waist, revealing a bit of bare midriff when she moved, while the upper half fit snugly over a pair of melons that had grown larger than Samira's head. The cut of her shirt was relatively modest, but her breasts were too big to hide—the spaces between the buttons shifted with each breath, and the half foot of cleavage she had on display was too tight to fit a quarter into.

Samira drew her eyebrows together in confusion. "I was this tall when we graduated."

"Not that," Katy scoffed, "Those!"

"Oh." Samira shrugged. "I don't know... I guess I had a late growth spurt."

"Pfft, must be nice."

They'd met at a bakery cafe famous for their cronuts. Katy ordered a single pastry while Samira got a box of a dozen. Her friend thought nothing of it, assuming she wanted to take some treats back to her dance troupe. As they sat and chatted, however, she noticed Samira pull a third pastry from the box and bite into it.

"Damn, you're still going. I can barely manage one of those things."

“Yeah,” Samira said, “I’m hungry all the time these days. I think it’s cause I burn so many calories dancing.”

“Must be nice,” Katy repeated.

As the two women swapped stories about former classmates and caught up on each other’s lives, Samira munched on one cronut after another. Each deep-fried pastry contained over 500 calories, but the busy dancer put them away like tortilla chips.

When Samira’s hand went into the box and found nothing but bits of dried glaze, Katy caught a look of disappointment on her friend’s face. With morbid curiosity, she asked, “Want some more?”

Samira’s faint smile was all the confirmation Katy needed. She went to the counter and bought another box of twelve. Watching her friend enjoy the sinful pastries for the past hour was more than she could bear, so she took one for herself before sliding the box in front of Samira, who smiled a quick thanks before resuming her feast.

Katy caught a slight movement in Samira’s chest as the gaps between her shirt buttons grew a tiny bit wider. “What was that?”

“–Mmpf– What was what?”

“Never mind.”

Across town, a seam in Naima’s pants popped a thread.